

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of preparing a novelty digital photograph of a subject, wherein is provided one or more templates, comprising the steps of:
 - a. activating a digital photo device, said photo device having at least one display device integral thereto;
 - b. selecting at least one template from among said at least one templates;
 - c. displaying a preview of said subject on said display;
 - d. simultaneously displaying in real-time a representation of said selected at least one templates together with said preview of said subject on said display while a user orients said photo device;
 - e. activating said photo device to capture a composite digital image of said subject and said selected at least one templates; and,
 - f. storing said composite image on computer readable medium, thereby creating a novelty digital photograph of a subject.
2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said one or more templates are graphic templates, each of said graphic templates containing at least one transparent region therein, said at least one transparent regions being for viewing at least a portion of the subject therethrough.
3. A method according to Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said one or more templates are video effects.
4. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
 - g. reading said composite image from said medium; and,

- h. displaying a representation of said composite image on a computer display.
5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein said selected template is a graphic template, wherein said selected template has a resolution commensurate with a resolution of said digital photo device, and wherein said representation of said selected at least one templates comprises a low-resolution version of said selected at least one templates.
6. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
- g. reading said composite image from said medium; and,
 - h. printing a representation of said composite image on a generally flat medium.
7. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the subject comprises a plurality of people.
8. A method of creating a composite photograph within a digital photo device, said digital photo device having a display device at least for displaying previews of digital images, wherein is provided at least one user-selectable template, comprising the steps of:
- a. within said digital photo device, selecting a template from among said at least one templates;
 - b. selecting a subject of said composite photograph;
 - c. simultaneously displaying in real-time a representation of said selected template together with a representation of said subject on said display while a user orients said photo device to include an image of the subject within the template;
 - d. activating said photo device to capture a composite digital image of said subject and said template; and,

- e. storing said composite image on computer readable medium, thereby creating a composite photograph.
- 9. A method according to Claim 8, wherein at least a portion of said at least one templates are graphic templates, each of said graphic templates containing at least one transparent region therein, said at least one transparent regions being for viewing at least a portion of the subject therethrough.
- 10. A method according to Claim 8, wherein the subject comprises a plurality of people.
- 11. A method according to Claim 8, further comprising the step of:
 - f. reading said composite image from said medium; and,
 - g. displaying a representation of said composite image on a computer display.
- 12. A method according to Claim 8, wherein said selected template is a graphic template, wherein said selected template has a resolution commensurate with a resolution of said digital photo device, and wherein said representation of said selected template comprises a low-resolution version of said selected template.
- 13. A method according to Claim 8, further comprising the step of:
 - f. reading said composite image from said medium; and,
 - g. printing a representation of said composite image on a generally flat medium.
- 14. A real-time method of creating a composite digital image within a digital photo device, said digital photo device having a preview display device integral thereto, said

display device at least for displaying previews of digital images, wherein is provided a plurality of user-selectable templates, comprising the steps of:

- a. within said digital photo device, selecting at least one template from among said plurality of templates;
- b. selecting a subject of said composite digital image;
- c. simultaneously displaying in real-time a representation of said selected at least one templates together with a representation of said subject on said preview display device while a user orients said photo device to include an image of the subject within the template as it appears in said preview display device;
- d. activating said photo device to capture a composite digital image of said subject and said template; and,
- e. storing said composite image on computer readable medium, thereby creating a composite photograph.

15. A real-time method of creating a composite digital image within a digital photo device according to Claim **14**, wherein is provided at least at least one template compatibility rule, and step (a) comprises the steps of

- (a1) within said digital photo device, choosing two or more templates from among said plurality of templates,
- (a2) selecting one or more of said template compatibility rules,
- (a3) using said selected template compatibility rules to determine whether said chosen two more templates are compatible,
- (a4) only if said selected templates are determined to be incompatible, requiring another selection according to step (a2), else, determining that said chosen two or more templates have been selected.

16. A method according to Claim 15 wherein one of said provided template compatibility rules contains a pre-defined listing of which of said plurality of templates is incompatible.
17. A method according to Claim 15 wherein at least one of said user-selectable templates is a graphic template, and one of said provided template compatibility rules specifies a maximum permitted proportion of said composite image occupied by one or more of said graphic templates.
18. A method according to Claim 14, wherein said selected template is a graphic template, wherein said selected template has a resolution commensurate with a resolution of said digital photo device, and wherein said representation of said selected at least one templates comprises a low-resolution version of said selected at least one templates.
19. A method according to Claim 14, further comprising the step of:
 - f. reading said composite image from said medium; and,
 - g. displaying a representation of said composite image on a computer display.
20. A method according to Claim 14, further comprising the step of:
 - f. reading said composite image from said medium; and,
 - g. printing a representation of said composite image on a generally flat medium.